



A JOURNEY IN SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

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As usual, I would like to start by commending all of our contributing authors in this year's journal. The articles contained within this issue offer a compelling deep vision for the future of servant-leadership. The articles in this volume also represent the diverse thinking of people from many countries, and a powerful landscape of human insight that inspires me.

GONZAGA FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES

The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The best test is: do those served grow as persons: do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?

—*Servant Leadership* (2002)

Robert K. Greenleaf

I would like to give special recognition to four of my Gonzaga University colleagues—servant-leaders all:

Shann Ferch and I began our collaboration on *The International Journal of Servant-Leadership* in 2005. I am happy to say that both the *Journal* and our friendship continue to grow deeper with each passing year. In 2011, Shann and I also collaborated on the publication of a book—*The Spirit of Servant-Leadership* (2011, Paulist Press), and Shann published *Forgiveness and Power in the Age of Atrocity: Servant Leadership as a Way of Life* (2011, Rowman & Littlefield), a book in which he succeeds in creating one of the most beautiful, inspiring, and lyrical books I have read on servant-leadership, or any subject. Shann is a person of remarkable



spirit, and many talents. In 2011, Shann also published an award-winning first book of short stories titled, *American Masculine*, written under the name of Shann Ray.

Mike Carey and I have known one another for a dozen years. During my years with the Greenleaf Center, I was thrilled to have Mike and Shann facilitate the annual Leadership Institute For Education. It was Mike, Shann, and retired Dean **Mary McFarland** who helped to create the Servant-Leadership Scholar role to which I was appointed in 2010. I am grateful to all three for that honor, and for our warm friendship.

John Horsman is the Gonzaga faculty member who designed our MA-ORGL 530 course called, “Servant Leadership.” I began to teach this outstanding online course in 2008 as an adjunct. In the past three years, I have taught some five hundred graduate students in that course and in several courses that I have designed for the Doctoral Program in Leadership Studies. The depth of thought and passion that John brings to servant-leadership is amazing.

Joe Albert is yet another remarkable Gonzaga friend and servant-leader. Joe and I discovered years ago that we had a mutual high regard for the state of New Jersey. Each of us has spent a lot of time at the Jersey Shore over many decades, which has given us a seemingly endless supply of stories to swap! Most of all, Joe and I share a great appreciation for the music and life of Bruce Springsteen. Our conversations about Springsteen have recently (perhaps inexorably) led us to begin writing an article on the theme of “Bruce Springsteen as Servant-Leader.” We are letting that one unfold in its own good time; however, I am hopeful that we may finish and publish it in 2012.

There are so many other wonderful colleagues and students at Gonzaga for whom I feel such gratitude. My thanks to all—named and unnamed—for your generosity of spirit, and for your friendship.

SERVANT-LEADERSHIP PUBLISHING

Along with my own experience—the stress and tension of my father’s and mother’s life that came with the difficulties of trying to make ends meet influenced my writings. I asked myself new questions. I felt a sense of accountability to the people I’d grown up alongside of. I began to wonder how to address that feeling.

—*Book of Songs* (1998)
Bruce Springsteen



The past two years have been most fruitful in terms of my servant-leadership writings and questions. For those who may be interested, here is an abbreviated listing of the servant-leadership publications work that I completed in 2010–11:

- *Within Your Reach: The Beatitudes in Business and Everyday Life*, B. Bottum (George SanFacon, Dorothy Lenz, and Larry Spears, editors; Lulu Publishing, 2010)
- “Bill Bottum, Servant-Leader” (Foreword), Larry Spears, in *Within Your Reach: The Beatitudes in Business and Everyday Life*, B. Bottum (George SanFacon, Dorothy Lenz, and Larry Spears, editors; Lulu Publishing, 2010)
- “Servant-Leadership and Robert K. Greenleaf’s Legacy,” Larry Spears, chapter 2 in *Servant Leadership: Developments in Theory and Research* (Dirk van Dierendonck and Kathleen Patterson, editors; Palgrave/Macmillan, 2010)
- “Practicing Servant-Leadership,” Larry Spears, chapter 8 in *The Jossey-Bass Reader on Nonprofit and Public Leadership* (James L. Perry, editor; Jossey-Bass, 2010)
- *The 2010 International Journal of Servant-Leadership* (Shann Ray Ferch and Larry C. Spears, editors; SUNY Press, 2010)
- “The Journey of Servant-Leadership,” Larry Spears, in *The 2010 International Journal of Servant-Leadership* (SUNY Press, 2010)
- “Seekers Anonymous: On Being a Seeker in the Twenty-First Century,” Richard J. Leider and Larry Spears, in *The 2010 International Journal of Servant-Leadership* (SUNY Press, 2010)
- “Servant-Leadership, Humility, and Action: An Interview with Ken Blanchard,” Ferch and Spears, in *The 2010 International Journal of Servant-Leadership* (SUNY Press, 2010)
- “The Board’s Twofold Challenge,” chapter 10 in *Setting the Agenda: Meditations for the Organization’s Soul* (Edgar Stoesz and Rick M. Stiffney, editors; Herald Press, 2011)
- *The Spirit of Servant-Leadership* (Shann Ray Ferch and Larry C. Spears, editors; Paulist Press, 2011)
- “Myers-Briggs and Servant-Leadership: The Servant-Leader and Personality Type,” (Ralph Lewis, Beth Lafferty, and Larry Spears, editors; The Spears Center, 2010)
- “The Spirit of Servant-Leadership (Introduction),” in *The Spirit of Servant-Leadership* (Ferch and Spears, editors; Paulist Press, 2011)



- “Holistic Servant-Leadership: A Multidimensional Approach,” George SanFacon and Larry Spears, chapter 6 in *The Spirit of Servant-Leadership* (Ferch and Spears, editors; Paulist Press, 2011)
- “Foreword,” in *Leading Wisely in Difficult Times: Three Cases of Faith and Business* (Michael Naughton and David Specht, editors; Paulist Press, 2011)
- “Foreword,” in *Forgiveness and Power in the Age of Atrocity: Servant Leadership as a Way of Life* (Shann Ray Ferch; Rowman and Littlefield, 2011)
- “The Heart of Giving: Servant-Leadership and Purposeful Philanthropy” (Richard J. Leider and Larry Spears; 2011)
- *Fortuitous Encounters* (Paul Davis and Larry Spears; manuscript in progress, 2011)
- *Conversations on Servant-Leadership* (Shann Ferch, Michael Carey, Mary McFarland, and Larry Spears; manuscript in progress, 2011)
- “The Promised Land: Bruce Springsteen as Servant-Leader” (Joe Albert and Larry Spears; paper in progress, 2011)

As much as possible, I continue to lean into my personal vision and mission of sharing the servant-as-leader idea far and wide. After twenty-two years of this work, I find that I am diving deeper than ever before. At the same time, my productivity and enthusiasm continue to grow in ways that I would not have thought possible years ago. I catch occasional glimpses of my best and most-integrated self while engaged in the processes of writing, teaching, and speaking on servant-leadership.

TEACHING

There is something subtle communicated to one who is being served and led if, implicit in the compact between servant-leader and led, is the understanding that the search for wholeness is something they share.

—*Servant Leadership* (2002)

Robert K. Greenleaf

In 2010–11, I have had the great gift of teaching sixteen graduate classes of more than three hundred students. Twelve of these have been online courses that I teach for Gonzaga University’s Masters Program in Organizational Leadership. Four of them have been online and on-campus courses that I teach for the Doctoral Program in Leadership Studies. The quality of



inquiry found among students in these courses is remarkable. There is a high level of engagement, and I am certain that I have learned as much or more through interactions with Gonzaga students, and through our shared search for wholeness.

There is something quite special about Gonzaga's commitment to high quality and engaging online learning. For many students, the online environment results in a deeper level of engagement than is often possible on campus. I think this is particularly true for the 40–50 percent of graduate students who are introverted by nature. In the classroom, introverts tend to take more time in formulating their thoughts and, as such, oftentimes the conversation has moved on before the introvert has reached the point of sharing with others. In the online environment, everyone has the time to process their thinking and to share it with others. There is also something about the relative anonymity of the online environment that tends to promote a higher degree of personal reflection that is shared through the Discussion Boards, as well as through papers and projects. By and large this online sharing is both appropriate and enhances everyone's learning.

I live in Indianapolis, and I am on Gonzaga's Spokane campus about twice a year. Whenever I am there, I look forward to meeting with those graduate students who are in residence. I often teach an intensive one-credit course on campus, or sometimes I will add an on-campus meeting to an online course. The spirit of servant-leadership is palpable.

TRAVELS

I slept and dreamt that life was Joy;
and then I awoke and realized
that life was Duty.
And then I went to work—and, lo
and behold I discovered that
Duty can be Joy.

Rabindranath Tagore, *Collected Poems and Plays* (1973)

I am most grateful for the kind invitations to speak on servant-leadership that I have received. I wish to recognize and to thank folks at the following institutions for their warm hearts, caring spirits, and commitment to servant-leadership:

- Butler University, Indianapolis, IN
- College of St. Elizabeth, Morristown, NJ



- Friends Association in Higher Education, Oskaloosa, IA/Philadelphia, PA
- Hope College, Holland, MI
- Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA
- Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN
- Marylhurst University, Portland, OR
- Regent University, Virginia Beach, VA
- The George Williams Retreat Center at Aurora University, Williams Bay, WI
- The Greenleaf Centre-United Kingdom, London, England
- The Robert K. Greenleaf Center, Westfield, IN
- The Philadelphia Center, Philadelphia, PA
- The Scanlon Network and Foundation, East Lansing/Kalamazoo, MI
- The Servant-Leadership Learning Community of Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN
- The Spears Center for Servant-Leadership, Indianapolis, IN
- University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI
- Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center, Fishersville, VA

Servant-leadership is mostly about who we strive to be as individuals. Still, many institutions are also committed to learning and growing through servant-leadership. As I travel by car, train, or plane, I hold these and other institutions in my heart.

CODA

If a good society is to be built, one that is more just and more caring, and where the less able and more able serve one another with unlimited liability, then the best way is to raise the performance of institutions as servants, and to sanction natural servants to serve and lead.

—*Servant Leadership* (2002)

Robert K. Greenleaf

One of my favorite classic films is *It's a Wonderful Life*. In that movie, Jimmy Stewart plays George Bailey, who is given the great privilege of seeing how he has made a difference in the lives of those who live in the town of Bedford Falls, and beyond. I believe that there are many of us who may secretly yearn for a similar experience, in the hope that we, too, have somehow had a positive impact somewhere. Absent a visit from an angel such as



Clarence Oddbody in *It's a Wonderful Life*, we are often left to wonder (and hope) that we have been of service to others.

In some small way, I believe that servant-leadership not only teaches us that each person matters, but that there is that of God to be found in everyone we meet on our journey.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Larry C. Spears is President and CEO of The Spears Center for Servant-Leadership (www.spearscenter.org), an international not-for-profit based in Indianapolis. From 1990–2007 he served as president and CEO of The Robert K. Greenleaf Center. A noted thought-leader and speaker on servant-leadership, he is author and editor of a dozen books, including *Insights on Leadership* (1998), and *The Spirit of Servant-Leadership* (2011, Shann Ferch and Larry C. Spears). Larry also serves as the Gonzaga University Servant-Leadership Scholar, and as senior advisory editor of *The International Journal of Servant-Leadership*—a joint publication of Gonzaga University and The Spears Center, published by SUNY Press.